

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRAINING WORKING TEAM FY 2005

INTRODUCTION

The TWT continues to meet regularly and deal with wildland fire training issues. Outstanding issues include: definition of our niche within the National Response Plan; the need for a comprehensive Training Management Program (TMP); increasing unmet demand for alternative delivery systems, and appropriate response to cost containment objectives. We continue to move ahead with Distance Learning as opportunity and funding allow.

Expectations being placed on the TWT are high and we must prioritize issues and serve the wildland fire community in the best way possible with the resources and authorities we have. Our service to this community is being impacted by our involvement in National Response Plan issues. Appropriate integration of NRP expectations and wildland fire response has not yet occurred and there is great tension in the system. That integration has the potential to increase wildland fire resources but there is no common set of expectations and qualifications yet.

We believe that implementation of a TMP is critical to the future of the interagency wildland fire training program and may result in a model for all responses. Investing in the TMP would allow the TWT to improve the development process, increase efficiency, and provide quality assurance. We believe that failure to invest in the program will severely limit the future effectiveness of wildland fire and emergency response training.

Our partnership with the US Fire Administration (USFA) continues to expand and the TWT is attempting to maximize our involvement in USFA efforts, where appropriate.

The curriculum that the Training Development staff is managing continues to expand as courses and positions are accepted by the IOSWT or Parent Group. The management of these courses is impacting the ability of the staff to provide timely development and revision of the suppression and incident management coursework. Technological advances are impacting all aspects of our program.

The TWT continues to meet annually with the geographic area training representatives and the IOS Working Team. These meetings improve coordination and we increased the number of joint meetings with IOS to facilitate revision of the PMS 310-1.

TEAM MEMBERSHIP

There was no turnover on the Training Working Team in FY 05 but Merrie Johnson will be leaving the National Park Service to manage the National Advanced Fire and Research Institute for the Forest Service. We expect this change to strengthen the interagency training program. Chad Fisher will be the new TWT representative for the NPS. In addition Joette Borzik has since left the USFWS and TWT. Her permanent replacement to the Team has not been identified.

SPECIFIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS

USFA Partnerships

The TWT has been very involved in several efforts being coordinated by USFA including: the Changing Roles effort to expand the use of Rural Fire departments in wildland fire response by filling the KSA gap between structural and wildland firefighters; the assessment of delivery capability of the states to provide structural department training; and development of position competencies for the ICS, wildland fire, support and associated activities positions (as identified in the draft revised PMS 310-1).

NWCG Development Unit

Eight new or revised courses are, or will be, available in the Publications Management System this year, including:

S-233, Tractor/Plow Boss	D-311, Initial Attack Dispatcher
S-260, Incident Business Mgmt.	I-100, Introduction to ICS (on-line)
S-330, Task Force/Strike Team Leader	FI-110, Wildland Fire Cause Det. for 1 st Responders
S-430, Operations Section Chief	FI-210, Wildland Fire Origin & Cause Det.

Carryover courses into FY06 include:

There are 27 courses currently being developed/revised in various stages of completion.

The development/revision cycle starts October 1, 2005 for:

J-342, Documentation UL Job Aid	S-357, Food UL
S-133, Look Up, Look Down, Look Around	S-358, Communications UL
S-347, Demob UL	S-360, Finance Admin. UL
S-348, Resources UL	RX-300, Burn Boss
S-354, Facilities UL	

The Development Unit will be working in conjunction with the Changing Roles Group in the development of Basic Fire Training for Rural Firefighters (online/CD S-130/S-190). We will have one Project Leader and one Distance Learning Specialist assigned to assist in completing this task.

Distance Learning Unit

A Distance Learning Strategic Plan was developed and various Distance Learning (DL) processes are being written which include how to upload courseware into USFA and DOI Learning Management Systems. The web site nwcg.training.gov is stable and we now have direct remote control over the server. A permanent fulltime position (PFT) position description has been submitted to the PMC to be filled in FY06. DL Unit is developing a process to address 508 Compliance Issues and for a direct conversion capability of certified learning content. We received training on several software programs for wildland fire eLearning application and have the capability to do rapid eLearning.

DL Staff collaborated with Project Leaders to apply appropriate learning content for:

- I-100, which is in final review stage and will be available through NWCG, USFA LMS and DOI GeoLearn;
- FI-210 DL pre-work;
- Assessment of S-130/S-190, which will have significant components converted to DL in FY 06.
- Future projects include S-130/190 targeted for cooperators, S-133 and various rapid eLearning pre-course training projects.

Leadership Committee

The www.fireleadership.gov web site continues to be widely used by wildland fire service personnel and others in the public service and private sectors. At the peak of the 2005 training season, this web site received over 200,000 hits in one month. In 2005 the Leadership Committee expanded the number of Staff Ride packages available in its Staff Ride Library; there are now 5 staff rides on the site in 4 different states, with more to be added in the near future. A Tactical Decision Game Library was also developed and placed online.

In a collaborative effort involving NAFRI, a group of subject matter experts and a private vendor, the first L-480 (Incident Management Team Leadership) course was successfully delivered in March 2005. In another effort, a graduate student completed his study of evaluation methodologies for the L-380 Fireline Leadership course and delivered his recommendations to the Committee. There are now 3 private sector vendors and one agency training cadre delivering the L-380 course, further validating the approach of certifying “course design criteria” as an alternative to “off-the-shelf” training materials. The Texas Forest Service is currently developing an L-380 for delivery in 2006.

TWT Web Site Design

The TWT web site content redesign is nearly complete. Contents are being converted to meet NWCG and we expect to be online by January.

Gap Analysis for S-420

Based on the competencies for the Unit Leaders up through the Type 2 C&GS level, a 20,000 ft. view of the learning gap is being contracted. Our goal is to look at this expensive and complex course to determine how to best assure that skills and knowledge are provided to the target audience.

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